

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L GABORONE 0249

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PDEV RH
SUBJ: RHODESIA: PRESIDENTIAL ADVISOR LEGWAILA ON INTERNAL
SETTLEMENT AND MALTA TALKS

1. AT SOCIAL OCCASION JAN 29, EMBOFF DISCUSSED SALISBURY
INTERNAL SETTLEMENT NEGOTIATIONS AND MALTA TALKS WITH PRESIDENTIAL
PRIVATE SECRETARY (POLITICAL) LEGWAILA. HE THOUGH IT POSSIBLE
THAT SMITH AND HIS NATIONALIST COUNTERPARTS MIGHT ACCELERATE
THEIR EFFORTS TO NAIL DOWN AN INTERNAL SETTLEMENT TO DIVERT
WORLD ATTENTION FROM MALTA TALKS. LEGWAILA SAW LITTLE PROSPECT
THAT MUGABE AND NKOMO WOULD ACCEPT AN INTERNAL SETTLEMENT; IN
HIS OPINION THEY WOULD, AT LEAST INITIALLY, ATTEMPT TO ESCALATE
GUERRILLA WAR.

2. IN THE LONGER TERM, LEGWAILA THOUGHT MUCH WOULD DEPEND
ON THE DETAILS OF AN INTERNAL SETTLEMENT. IF AGREEMENT APPEARED
TO BRING ABOUT MAJORITY RULE ON TERMS AT LEAST APPROXIMATING
ONE-MAN, ONE-VOTE, NKOMO MIGHT ULTIMATELY COME UNDER INCREASING
PRESSURE TO JOIN THE SETTLEMENT. IN LEGWAILA'S OPINION, NKOMO'S
ACCESSION TO AN INTERNAL SETTLEMENT WOULD GIVE IT A GOOD CHANCE
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OF SUCCESS; MUGABE WOULD THEN EITHER JOIN IN OR BECOME IRRELEVANT
TO ZIMBABWE'S POLITICAL FUTURE.

3. LEGWAILA DOUBTED, HOWEVER, THAT PROPOSED TERMS OF INTERNAL
SETTLEMENT NOW APPEARING IN MEDIA WOULD BE GOOD ENOUGH TO
DRAW NKOMO IN. LEGWAILA TOLD US THAT HE PERSONALLY HAS TROUBLE
WITH IDEA OF SEPARATE ELECTORAL ROLLS WHICH WOULD GUARANTEE

28 PARLIAMENTARY SEATS FOR WHITES, AND HE PREDICTED THAT OTHER AFRICANS WOULD ALSO OPPOSE SUCH PROVISIONS.

4. WITH REGARD TO MALTA TALKS, LEGWAILA WONDERED WHAT CONCRETE STEPS NKOMO AND MUGABE WOULD BE READY TO TAKE TOWARD IMPLEMENTATION OF THE ANGLO-AMERICAN PLAN. HE SPECULATED THAT ZANU/ZAPU DISUNITY WOULD CONTINUE TO CLOUD POLITICAL FUTURES OF NKOMO AND MUGABE AND RETARD DEVELOPMENT OF UK/US SETTLEMENT PLAN. WITH BITTER AMUSEMENT, HE REPEATED FAMILIAR GOB CRITICISM OF PF LEADERS' PROCLIVITY FOR TRAVEL AND HIGH LIVING AT EXPENSE OF BOTH AFRICAN AND WESTERN COUNTRIES.

5. COMMENT: LEGWAILA'S STATEMENTS USUALLY REFLECT HIGH LEVEL, IF NOT PRESIDENTIAL, THINKING ON RHODESIAN ISSUES. FOR LEGWAILA AND OTHERS IN GOB LEADERSHIP, THE PRINCIPLE OF DEMOCRATIC MAJORITY RULE CONTINUES TO BE MORE IMPORTANT THAN THE PROCESS BY WHICH IT IS REACHED. AS THEIR PUBLIC STATEMENTS HAVE INDICATED, GOB LEADERS BELIEVE UK/US PLAN REPRESENTS BEST HOPE FOR ZIMBABWE SETTLEMENT, AND THEY WOULD MUCH PREFER TO SEE THE INITIATIVE WORK. IF HOWEVER THE UK/US PLAN APPEARS TO STALL, THEY MIGHT BE WILLING TO ACCEPT AN INTERNAL SETTLEMENT WHICH PROMISED TO DELIVER DEMOCRATIC MAJORITY RULE, PARTICULARLY IF NKOMO DECIDED TO ACCEDE TO THE AGREEMENT.

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